

# Academic Anchor

*Addressing educational issues that affect military children in Navy Region Southwest.*



Issue 6, June 2009

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## School Honors Military

On May 22, 2009, Central Elementary School in Imperial Beach, California held a school-wide Military Appreciation Day Event. This unique little school is one of twelve elementary schools in the South Bay School District. A close proximity to the Naval Outlying Landing Field and only ten miles to Naval Base Coronado means that this school has a close connection to the military.

Principal Linda Sullivan thought it was important for the school to honor the military members who serve our country. The Military Appreciation Day Event was the culminating activity to a month of learning activities aimed at teaching students about history, the meaning of service, honor, and patriotism. Students engaged in several writing activities and art project and they created a wonderful slide show that was a tribute to all service members. The work was all proudly displayed in the multi-purpose room where the Military Appreciation Event was held.

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Visit us on the web!

<http://www.cnrsw.navy.mil/fsc/schools.htm>

# K-12 Joint Education Forum

*A Collaborative Effort to Support Military Children in Education*

Marine Corps Installations West and Navy Region Southwest hosted the first ever K-12 Joint Education Forum on May 28, 2009 at MCAS Miramar. This inaugural gathering in the southwest region had a goal of bringing installation commanders, military leadership, and school superintendents together with military service providers and other leaders in education to examine issues and solutions related to the impact of the current school budget crisis.

This day long event included three components. The Forum was kicked off with a moving video of military children sharing their experiences with frequent moves. The video was a stark reminder of why this even was so important--the children! The video was followed by moving and passionate remarks made by Major General Michael Lenhert.

Dr. Jean Silvernail, director of



the PACOM Education Division was the keynote speaker and spoke to the audience about the "Lessons Learned in the Trenches." She talked about the triumphs and roadblocks along the way, but focused on the positive outcomes of collaborative partnerships.

A candid panel discussion between military service providers from Navy and Marine Corps Headquarters, DoDEA, Department of Defense Quality of Life, Military Child Education Coalition and a local area Superintendent highlighted some of the challenges faced by school districts, and some ideas of how various programs in the DOD can help support our



schools.

The remainder of the day was spent in working groups sponsored by the Military Child Education Coalition, DoDEA and leaders in education to assist in developing a greater understanding of the unique needs of our military youth and how to build successful partnerships to help move needed services outside the "gate."

The day was enlightening and productive. Major General Lenhert and RADM Hering would like to thank all attendees for their participation and for supporting military children in education. A special thanks goes out to Dr. Silvernail, DoDEA, Military Child Education Coalition, Marine Corps Headquarters and Navy Headquarters, and the Yellow Ribbon Team for your attendance and involvement. Your support was instrumental in the success of the event.

## This Month's Featured Web Resource

### Summer Reading Resources

Keep your child's reading skills up to par this summer! Think about joining a summer reading program at your local library. Most public libraries host summer reading programs that provide incentives to keep children reading! The website below has GREAT reading suggested summer reading lists by grade level from Kindergarten to college bound students. It also features "Special Lists" that highlights "Guy Reads," award winning books, and the Book Adventure guide. Parents can find resources for promoting good reading skills as well. Although the reading lists are featured on the San Diego County Office of Education website, they are good suggestions no matter where you live in the region!



[http://www.sdcoe.net/student\\_info.asp?sec=srr](http://www.sdcoe.net/student_info.asp?sec=srr)



# Alternative Education Options



As we head into summer, parents are already looking ahead to the next school year. As you investigate the educational opportunities available for your children, you may want to look into the California or Nevada Virtual Academies. These are public schools, and available tuition free.

CAVA (California Virtual Academy) and the Nevada Virtual Academy are part of the K12 program. The K<sup>12</sup> curriculum and patented methodology for online learning is ideal for harnessing this powerful approach to learning.

## Why Online Learning?

The exceptional, **engaging K<sup>12</sup> curriculum**

- A high-quality, **tuition-free public education**
- An **individualized approach to learning**
- An **active, supportive school community**
- Passionate, **California-credentialed teachers**
- A **WASC-accredited** school
- An ideal fit for **accelerated learners**

**Rich, challenging, and engaging content**, delivered in state-of-the-art online lessons along with traditional materials.

**An Individualized Learning Plan** designed for each child to ensure a customized program

**Cutting-edge technology** that enables individualized learning to happen anytime, anywhere.

**Well-qualified, state-certified teachers** are trained directly by K<sup>12</sup> to teach students enrolled in K<sup>12</sup> partner schools.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Q: Who is eligible for CAVA?

**A:** Each California Virtual Academy is an autonomous school authorized by the district hosting the school and that can enroll students living in the school's home county or adjoining counties. Eligible counties include (but is not limited to)

Santa Barbara	Alameda
Fresno	Santa Clara
Kings	Santa Cruz
Monterey	Lake
Los Angeles	Marin
Ventura	Mendocino
Imperial	Napa
Orange	Solano
Riverside	Sonoma
San Diego	

For a complete list of eligible counties and to download enrollment packets by COUNTY, Visit:

[http://www.k12.com/cava/faqs/enrollment\\_\\_attendance/](http://www.k12.com/cava/faqs/enrollment__attendance/)

### Q: Can I enroll in Nevada?

**A:** YES! Enrollment for students in the Nevada Virtual School in grades K-12 for the 2009-2010 school year is now open. Visit:

[http://www.k12.com/nvva/how\\_to\\_enroll/](http://www.k12.com/nvva/how_to_enroll/)

### Q: What are the costs?

**A:** Because it is part of the public school system, Virtual Academies is tuition-free. The entire K<sup>12</sup> curriculum is provided free of charge, **as well as a loaner computer, printer, and Internet stipend.**

### Q: What subjects will my child study?

**A:** Language Arts, Math, Science, History, Music, and Art are the core courses. There will also be other courses in the appropriate grade levels, such as Physical Education. High school students also take a foreign language course, and have access to AP® courses as well

### Q: Does the program provide textbooks and other instructional materials?

**A:** Yes, we provide all the textbooks and instructional materials that are needed to complete the program.

### Q: Do you provide curriculum for special needs children?

**A:** Depending on a child's IEP, we can tailor our curriculum to meet your needs. To discuss your child's needs call toll-free 866.339.6790.

### Q: Can you accommodate the accelerated learning needs of my gifted/talented child?

**A:** Placement assessments taken online during the enrollment process allow us to place your student in the appropriate level of curriculum. So, for example, if your fourth grader is doing math on a sixth-grade level and reading on a fourth-grade level, we can tailor your curriculum and lesson plans to meet her abilities

### Q: How do students interact socially?

**A:** Throughout the year, students are invited to participate in school outings, field trips (e.g., to historical sites, museums, zoos), picnics, and other social events. We expect local clusters of students and parents to get together on a regular basis in their areas. We also are exploring new ways to interact socially using the powerful reach of the Internet.

Remember that online learning is NOT suitable for every child.

More information is available at  
CA: <http://www.k12.com/cava/>  
NV: <http://www.k12.com/nvva/>

To download the school's accountability report card:

[http://www.k12.com/filefolder/CAVA\\_San\\_Diego.pdf](http://www.k12.com/filefolder/CAVA_San_Diego.pdf)



# Excellence in Education

*Highlighting Military Friendly Schools in the San Diego Area*

## Central Elementary School, Imperial Beach, California



From the moment guests walked into the multi-purpose room at Central Elementary School on 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Imperial Beach, they could not help but feel patriotic. The audience of children was a sea of red, white and blue, and the room echoed in patriotic song as the children sang along with the music being piped through the sound system. On stage sat active duty service members from the United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, and retired personnel as well. Several of the military members had children attending Central Elementary School, making them "extra special guests."

Service members present were volunteers from commands at Naval Base Coronado and the Marine Corps Recruit Depot. Volunteer active duty honorees included: EN1 Garrett, 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt Adam Bala, SA Hummel, EN2 Valentin, AOC Stewart, ME2 Otis, EN1 Palamara, SA Swanson, AW3 Lamb, HMC Santos, Cpri Ruiz, and PO2 Edwards.

Military members snapped to attention, and students stood

tall and proudly watched as the ceremony began with the presentation of colors by the school safety patrol officers. The keynote speaker, First Sgt Adam Bala led the school in the Pledge of Allegiance, which was followed by the singing of the National Anthem.

Mrs. Sullivan addressed the students and special guests with a moving introduction, "Our national is strong because of the military. Each one of these service members has made great sacrifices. Today, we join as a school to show our gratitude and appreciation for your service." Mrs. Sullivan then introduced First Sergeant Adam Bala from the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego. A quick military quiz left the audience in a roar of laughter, and was then followed by a serious discussion about the sacrifices and struggles that military personnel, their families and even children go through in order to serve their country. First Sergeant Bala explained that although all of the guests on stage wore different uniforms, and had different jobs, that they were all on one team with one job...to protect the freedoms that we all enjoy every day. Finally, Sgt. Bala asked that on Monday when the

school is closed that the students and families take a moment to remember why they have the day off, and that they pause for at least a moment during their picnics to remember those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for their country...their lives.

Each special honoree spoke about their service. They included where they were stationed and what their job entailed. After sharing their experiences with the audience they were each presented with a flower.

Audience members then enjoyed a wonderful slide show dedicated to the military. It was set to inspiration, patriotic and groovy music! Finally, students shared the letters of thanks and praise they wrote to military members. There were many guests that were overwhelmed with emotions.

This was a truly memorable event that recognizes the importance of the community in which the school lies. The students at Central Elementary School are not only appreciative and patriotic, but also extremely well behaved and respectful.



# Summer Countdown

## San Diego Unified Summer School

**Special Education - Elementary & Middle:** Two sessions are being offered for elementary and middle Special Education students with extended year marked on their IEPs. Students may attend EITHER Session 1 from June 22 – July 17, OR Session 2 from July 27 – August 21.

**Special Education - High School:** One session is being offered from June 22 – July 31 for high school Special Education Students with extended year marked on their IEPs.

**General Education Elementary & Middle:** One session is being offered for elementary and middle students recommended for retention in Grades 1, 3 and 8, and to students scoring below and far below basic in Language Arts and Math in Grades 1, 3, 5/6 (at elementary only) and 8. The session will be held from July 27 – Aug 21, and will allow eligible students the opportunity to attend Summer School the closest open neighborhood school, regardless of track.

**General Education - High School:** One session is being offered from June 22-July 31 for students in grades 9-12 who need to make up D and F grades in core courses.

### Contact Information:

Rhonda Archard  
619-725-7147 or  
[rarchard@sandi.net](mailto:rarchard@sandi.net)

Lisa Sheldon  
619-725-7139  
[lsheldo1@sandi.net](mailto:lsheldo1@sandi.net)

## Virtual Summer School

K<sup>12</sup> summer program courses meet or exceed state and national standards and are adapted for a condensed 8-week or 4-week summer session. And, whether this individualized learning is delivered in a school lab setting or in the home, it's a cost-effective way to get a powerfully effective educational experience.

K<sup>12</sup> works with schools – or with parents directly – to provide the support needed to successfully implement an online summer school course or program. This can be ideal for students who:

- Need to retrieve a lost credit
- Want to get ahead
- Want to explore new electives which might not fit into their regular schedule (e.g. web design)

All 38 credit-bearing courses are available right now and can fit into a busy family's summer schedule. Be sure to get all the details on the program, plus see a complete catalog of courses and pricing. Summer Enrollment is now open. Visit: <http://www.k12.com/who-we-help/summer-school/>

## Other Options

- SOAR [www.soarathome.org](http://www.soarathome.org)

Student Online Achievement Resources is an online program that is FREE for military families and school districts impacted with military children. Students take assessments in Reading and Math. The assessments are standards based and will give a full report of your child's skills. The report will identify strengths and weaknesses in each

## Other Options *con't*

academic area. Next, the program creates skill building activities that either provide practice and instruction in weak areas, or enrichment in areas where the assessment indicated your child had strengths.

Parents have access to detailed reports showing the progress your child is making. Additionally, there are resources provided for more support. Take advantage of this AWESOME FREE resource!

- Sylvan Learning Center offers tutoring both in learning centers and online. Most Sylvan Centers offer a military discount.

<http://tutoring.sylvanlearning.com/>

- Kaplan is another company that offers summer programs both in learning centers and online. Kaplan also offers a military discount.

<http://www.kaplan.com/KidsSchools/>

- Summer Skills : The Summer Skills books use a highly effective approach to academic review. They offer three series of high impact review books, sold separately by grade level. They are designed to help students maintain their academic skills over the summer. Each book focuses on skills related to just one area of study with each lesson reinforcing what has been learned so your child will get the maximum benefit of time. The books are available for a very reasonable cost. A very good alternative to costly tutoring programs. Visit [www.summerskills.com](http://www.summerskills.com)



# The College Corner

*Resources for your high school students*

## The Summer Before Freshman Year at College

Most students will agree that high school senior year is the most awesome, happy, sad, and stressful one that they have seen to date. There will be new emotions and worries with which to deal. With the demands of the senior workload, college applications, college visits, extra curricular activities, and normal social obligations, it is hard to focus on the real and important needs of the college preparation. Suddenly, summer is here and gone and, in a blink of an eye, you are lugging your suitcase in one hand and your new dorm key in the other! Taking on some of the responsibilities for the move to college is an important step in saving family members unnecessary stress, anxiety and loss of sleep. From one who learned this, here are a few tips that college-bound students might find helpful, as they get ready for their move:

### Helpful Tips:

\*Organize. Many times, the parent deals with the lists, the mail, and the deadlines. It is crucial for the student to take part in the process. Keep your own checklist. Be sure to start early before the activities of a summer engulf you!

\*Request a list of essential packing items from your college or borrow one from someone who has already been through the process. Go over it carefully with your parents to make sure nothing is forgotten.

\*Spend time with your good friends. In many cases, you will be leaving one another to head to different parts of the country. Savor the moments you have. Each of you will be experiencing similar feelings and doubts as you prepare for this exciting and somewhat frightening step forward. Sharing thoughts and concerns with each other can help to validate your own feelings and make them less worrisome.

\*Create or fill albums with pictures and memorabilia of your senior year. Not only will this be fun to share many years down the road, it is an important item to take with you so that you can share backgrounds with your new friends at college.



\* Through the whole process, be patient and help keep the family lines of communication open. (This is easier said than done.) Parents and children can get on each other's nerves during this transitional stage. Parents can appear overly obsessed with lists, deadlines, reading materials and responsibilities. Externally, students can project indifference and procrastination while, internally, they are

sometimes feeling overwhelmed, frightened and confused. Share your feelings with your parents. At this time in life, the worst thing you can do is to shut them out. Being open with each other will foster a better understanding for all.

\*Talk with your assigned roommate during the summer. When your college sends information on your new roommate, make contact with her/him. It might feel uncomfortable at first, but it can break the ice, help each of you to get to know one another and, importantly, share thoughts on what to bring to the new "home."

\*Take part in your college orientation program. This is a great way to get to meet new friends and get acquainted with the campus. Nowadays, most orientation programs are well planned and help freshmen begin to feel "at home."

\*Take part in your college orientation program. This is a great way to get to meet new friends and get acquainted with the campus. Nowadays, most orientation programs are well planned and help freshmen begin to feel "at home."

## Interstate Compact for Educational Opportunity for Military Children Update

Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley signed the *Interstate Compact* into law becoming the 20th State to join the Compact. Alabama Governor Bob Riley and Alaska Governor Sarah Palin both signed Compact legislation within the past week. In addition, Hawaii has passed the Compact and is waiting for Governor Linda Lingle to sign it into law.

In California and Nevada support is still needed. Visit <http://www.helpingmilitaryfamilies.com/ab343-fact-sheet.html> for a CA fact sheet.

In Nevada the Compact (SB 303) was referred to the finance committee on 4/17

The letter of support on the website above could be used for California or Nevada!

## Parents have the Power to Close the Achievement Gap

San Diego, CA – Did you know that every 26 seconds a student drops out of public high school. The national average for high school graduation is 70%. Fewer students are fulfilling the requirements to attend a four-year university. This news impacts all houses regardless of ethnicity, income and/or status. The good news is that as a parent or family member you can do something to change these statistics around in your home TODAY!

Empowering Parents travels around the country motivating parents by utilizing educational information, music, poetry, "reality statistics" and audience participation.

President Barack Obama summarizes parental engagement best when he says, "There's one last ingredient and that's parents. We can't do it just in the schools. Parents are going to have to show more responsibility... they have got to turn off the TV set, put away the video games and finally start instilling that thirst for knowledge that our students need."

Empowering Parents has been presenting a very similar message to parents for some time now. We are in an educational crisis and it's going to take parents working **together** to ensure educational success for all parties involved. While the work of educators is greatly appreciated, we are deceiving ourselves if we think educational success can happen without partnering with parents.

Educators only have our children for six hours a day but a parent/guardian has their influence for 24/7. Therefore it requires all of us **communicating and working together** to help close the educational achievement gap.

**Marsha R. Dodson** and **Dr. Darlene V. Willis** are Educational Consultants and the Co-Authors of *Empowering Parents: A Guide to Taking Control of Your Child's Educational Journey*. Both experts are the Co-Founders of Concerned Parents Alliance, Inc and its successful educational component entitled College Bound San Diego.

They empower parents, families, administrators, educators and community regarding education, parent and family empowerment and taking control of one's educational journey.

In addition, Empowering Parents offers individualized services through the A+ College Program that helps to assist students and their parents with college applications, essays and personal statements, financial aid and scholarships, and post college acceptance. For more information, please contact Empowering Parents at (858) 484-9300 or [empoweringparents@san.rr.com](mailto:empoweringparents@san.rr.com).

*Inclusion of this article does not imply that the program is endorsed by the Navy. It is provided for informational purposes only and as a resource for our families.*

## Contact Us!

### Navy Region Southwest Regional School Liaison

Kirsten Webb, MS.Ed  
[kirsten.webb@navy.mil](mailto:kirsten.webb@navy.mil)  
(619) 532-4251

### San Diego Metro School Liaisons

Desiree Clarke  
[desiree.clarke@mwrsd.com](mailto:desiree.clarke@mwrsd.com)  
(619) 991-2509

Linda Bosia, M.Ed  
[linda.bosia@navy.mil](mailto:linda.bosia@navy.mil)  
(858) 431-6482

## The Common Calendar Arrives in Chula Vista!

Chula Vista Elementary School has approved a common calendar that mirrors the calendar that Sweetwater District adopted in December 20008.

Although change can be difficult, the districts believe the common calendar will have many benefits. For military families, it will make transition easier.

The new school year will begin on July 27<sup>th</sup>.



The 2009-10 school year starts  
**July 27, 2009**  
for all schools in the  
**Chula Vista Elementary School District.\***

\*Check with individual charter schools for their respective breaks and ending dates.

### Key features of the new school schedule include:

- Two-week breaks in the fall and spring.
- Three-week break in winter.
- Students end school June 8, 2010.
- Six-week summer break.

**July 27, 2009**  
**School Starts!**

